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1786, and told him that in years gone by (about 100 if his memory was correct), a Russian officer had been exploring the coast, and had instructed some of the natives in the art of surveying. There was an Astronomical Board at Jeddo, the President of which Siebold had instructed in astronomy, in taking latitudes, longitudes, &c.; and under his auspices it is believed all the good maps are published.

The PRESIDENT said as no other gentleman wished to speak on the subject of the Paper, he desired to make a communication respecting the exploration of the White Nile. Most of them had seen in the papers the report of the loss of Mr. Consul Petherick and his wife. He had only heard of the loss of this truly enterprising man from the papers. It was a melancholy subject for them to consider, and the loss was deeply to be regretted. The Council of the Society, seriously impressed with the importance of carrying out the enterprise which Mr. Petherick had in view, that of carrying up provisions to the succour of Captains Speke and Grant in the country above Gondokoro, and knowing that that most adventurous person, Mr. Baker, after exploring the tributaries of the Atbara River, was about to proceed on his travels in that direction, resolved to request him to undertake the mission that had been accepted by Mr. Petherick, in case that bold explorer should be no more, and to place at the disposal of Mr. Baker for that purpose the balance of the sum of money which remained in hand out of the subscription raised by geographers in this country to furnish Mr. Petherick with the requisite means.

While upon this subject, he begged to add that he had been informed by Mr. Tinné that the adventurous ladies, of whom mention had been made on a previous occasion as having hired a steamer at Khartûm with the intention of ascending the White Nile, had, according to the last accounts, gone for a whole day of steaming beyond Gondokoro, the station which Mr. Petherick had fixed upon to deposit provisions for the use of Speke and Grant. The names of these ladies would be made known hereafter among those of the ardent explorers of the day. They had returned to Khartûm, where they arrived on the 24th of November, and at that time Mr. Baker was about to proceed on his expedition. He had, therefore, every hope that in the end sufficient supplies might reach Speke and Grant, and that at some future meeting they might be able to report the happy termination of an expedition in which the Geographical Society took so deep an interest.

Sixth Meeting, Monday, February 9th, 1863.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*Captains E. R. Fremantle, R.N., and C. E. Barrett-Lennard, were presented upon their election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Commander William Arthur, R.N.; Commander Charles J. Bullock, R.N.; Captain John Clayton; Captain Richard Bulkeley Pearce, R.N.; Colonel R. C. H. Taylor; Edward Armitage; William Broughall; Richard Corbet; William Eames Heathfield; James Macbraire; and W. H. Wylde, Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

ACCESSIONS.—Among the donations to the Library and Map-rooms since the former meeting were—‘Memoirs of the Geological Survey

of India,' twelve sheets of 'Siebold's Atlas,' from Captain Malcolm, R.E.; 'Ethnographical Map of Finland,' Admiralty Charts, &c. &c.

The PRESIDENT.—In opening this meeting, I have a communication to make, which I am sure you will hear with very great satisfaction. Those of you who are in the habit of attending will recollect that our first meeting of the Session happened to fall on the day set apart for the celebration of the birthday of the Prince of Wales, and on that occasion I expressed the hope that ere long His Royal Highness would consent to fill the place occupied by his lamented and illustrious father, as the Vice-Patron of the Royal Geographical Society. I also said that seldom had a Prince become so qualified for such an office, inasmuch as His Royal Highness has travelled over larger tracts of the globe than many of us who are here assembled. I am happy now to be able to announce that I have recently received a letter from General Knollys, in which he states the great gratification which it affords His Royal Highness to accept the distinction, particularly as it was a post which had been occupied by his illustrious Parent.

The PRESIDENT said he ought also to make a communication with reference to the fate of the enterprising traveller, Petherick. He wished it were in his power to dispel the reports of his death, which seemed to have reached Alexandria in some way through the natives. He had no great comfort to offer either to those who were interested in the success of the expedition, or to the friends and relatives of Mr. Petherick, except this, that by the last letter received from Mr. Baker at Khartûm, it appeared that Mr. Consul Petherick, after sending back his water-logged boats to Khartûm, containing his injured provisions, had expressed his determination to go forward on foot; and that instead of proceeding to Gondokoro, or due south, he had deviated to the westward, to a place which he had visited for trade in former years. Probably he had gone far to the west, and had got into a country which was very difficult to traverse at that season, owing to the inundations of various streams and rivers. This deviation from the line which he was expected to take, might explain why no trace of him had been discovered by the adventurous ladies who had gone up from Khartûm, beyond Gondokoro; and it afforded the only ground of hope he could offer, that Mr. Petherick might still be heard of, and that the report of his death was premature. Mr. Tinné, who had been so kind as to communicate all the information they possessed respecting these ladies, would read a short extract from a letter which he had received from one of them relating to Mr. Petherick.

Mr. TINNÉ read the following extract :—

“Khartûm, Dec. 1, 1862.

“The Petherick expedition, of which you no doubt have heard, does not, so far, succeed.

“They left so late that contrary wind from the south had set in against them, and brought them at last to a stop at the Catholic Mission of the Keks.

“They were obliged to leave their boats there with all the fine things they had brought with them from England—iron, conveyances, provisions, &c.—and go by land under a thousand difficulties to Niambara. We could not

learn for certain what had become of them, but negroes told us they had been drowned in crossing a river. I do not know if this be true."

The Papers read were—

1. *Report on the Countries in the neighbourhood of the Niger.*

By DR. W. B. BAIKIE, M.D., F.R.G.S.

DR. BAIKIE advocates the immediate formation of a trading station and a consular establishment on the banks of the Niger. He states that it would secure preponderance and priority for English commerce, and would form a basis for English influence in Central Africa. A permanent establishment would serve to keep rude tribes in check, while it would be far from unpopular with the more settled population. It would afford the missionary and the philanthropist a centre for their Christianizing and civilizing endeavours, and finally it would bring to a practical conclusion the various Niger expeditions. He considers the present to be a most favourable time for such an establishment; ground has been secured and occupied, the foundation of a market laid, the navigation of the river has been opened from the confluence upwards, and there is a general feeling among the natives that we are at length really going to take such a step. He considers the confluence to be decidedly the best position for an establishment. It is the most central, is easily reached from the sea, is the point of convergence of many roads from the interior, is already a recognised market-place, and has proved to be healthy during Dr. Baikie's residence of two years.

Extracts from numerous despatches by Dr. Baikie have been printed by the Foreign Office, and are ordered by the Council of the Royal Geographical Society to be placed in their library. Some of them refer to the country whence cotton may be obtained, in which respect Bonu and Nupe are preferable to Yoruba, because in the former three-fourths of the labouring population are free to raise and sell their own crops, while in Yoruba the chief production is in the hands of large traders, who would infallibly add to their slaves in the event of an enlarged demand. Most of the extracts are purely geographical, and extend or correct Dr. Barth's deductions from native hearsay, or his own observations. Baikie gives the following data on the anomalous rise and fall of the Niger, which was first observed by Barth and minutely discussed in vol. v., p. 5, of that traveller's work. The observation of four years at Busa showed the maximum height to be attained at the end of September; early in October the river begins to fall; during November it falls rapidly; it slackens towards the end of December, and is stationary in January. Between the end of January and the end of